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PICASSO ELECTRONIC FIELDTRIP

A FIRST FOR NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Washington, D.C., May 15, 1997 -- Hundreds of students in the Maryland-DC area will get a behind-the-scenes look at the popular exhibition Picasso: The Early Years, 1892-1906 in an innovative electronic fieldtrip -- the first of its kind at the National Gallery of Art -- on Thursday, May 22. Working closely with the Gallery's education, curatorial, and conservation staff, Maryland Public Television (MPT) is organizing and producing the electronic fieldtrip. The program is funded by a grant from Bell Atlantic, which also made possible the Picasso exhibition. The production will be broadcast live at 9 a.m. on MPT/Channels 22, 28, 31, 36, 62, and 67 and WETA/Channel 26.

On May 22, middle and high school students will begin their electronic journey with an interactive visit to the Picasso exhibition, where they will explore paintings, sculptures, and works on paper, many of them created by Picasso when he was their own age. Students from Mt. Hebron High School (Ellicott City, MD) and Towson High School (Towson, MD) will be at remote distance learning sites. Students from Jefferson Junior High School (Washington, D.C.) will be on site at the National Gallery of Art. Each classroom will be linked by fiber-optic full-motion video, allowing the students to see, hear, and respond in real time.

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During the 60-minute program, students will plumb the depths of Picasso's early life and works through a combination of pre-taped sessions that include a visit to the Gallery's conservation lab to discover the "hidden" images underneath several of the paintings in the show with comments by Jeffrey Weiss, curator of the exhibition. These sessions will be interwoven with live conversations and "questions and answers" with Gallery educators and art historians Linda Downs, Wilford Scott, and Anne Henderson, along with painting conservator Ann Hoenigswald, all of whom will be on site in the exhibition galleries during the live program. The program host, Baltimore-area actor and narrator Margaret Linton, will bring the Gallery experts and students together to reveal key works in Picasso's brilliant young career and explore themes leading to his groundbreaking development of cubism.

In addition to the distance learning sites, students in classrooms throughout the region will be able to watch the program on television and ask questions via fax, telephone and the Internet. Students can further their knowledge by visiting the National Gallery's Web site at <http://www.nga.gov> or MPT's home page at <http://www.mpt.org>. MPT is also supplying an in-depth teacher's guide to classrooms in the region. A 30-minute edited version of the interactive program will be broadcast on MPT on Thursday, June 26 at 7:30 p.m. and Wednesday, July 2 at 7:30 p.m.

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